

## Message Text

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44

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05 PA-02

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /073 W

----- 091032

R 081344Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3769

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS JOHANNESBURG 0337

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SF

SUBJ: SCHISM WIDENS BETWEEN LIBERAL & CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS  
WITHIN ALL-WHITE SOUTH AFRICAN CONFEDERATION OF LABOUR  
(CONFED)

REF: JOHANNESBURG 1267 NOV. 26, 1974; JOHANNESBURG A-9, FEB 5, 1975

1. RELATIVELY LIBERAL JOHANNESBURG-BASED FEDERAL CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS & HARBOURS STAFF ASSOCIATIONS WHICH LOST CONTROL OF SIX-MAN CONFED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO CONSERVATIVE PRETORIA-BASED COORDINATING COUNCIL OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS IN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTIONS LAST NOVEMBER (REFTEL) DECIDED FEBRUARY 28 BY 3-0 VOTE WITH 4 ABSTENTIONS TO WITHDRAW FROM CONFED.

2. SEVEN UNIONS WHICH MAKE UP FEDERAL COUNCIL (WITH TOTAL OF OVER 80,000 MEMBERS) WILL NOW HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO AFFILIATE WITH CONFED IN THEIR CAPACITIES AS INDIVIDUAL UNIONS. EXPECTATION IS THAT MOST IF NOT ALL WILL OPT IN FAVOR OF INDIVIDUAL AFFILIATION SINCE UNDER CONFED'S WEIGHTED VOTING SYSTEM THEY WILL ENJOY  
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GREATER TOTAL INFLUENCE AS INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.

3. PRINCIPAL CAUSE OF SHISM IS BASIC DISAGREEMENT ON HOW TO DEAL WITH BLACK LABOR. FEDERAL COUNCIL UNIONS HAVE ADOPTED RELATIVELY POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD BLACK ADVANCEMENT (WITH ESTIMATED 13,000 BLACKS NOW PERFORMING FUNCTIONS ALBEIT AT LOWER WAGES FORMERLY RESERVED FOR WHITES ON SOUTH AFRICAN RAILWAYS) WHEREAS COORDINATING COUNCIL UNIONS HAVE STEADFASTLY RESISTED BLACK ENCROACHMENT EVEN IN FACE OF INCREASING SHORTAGES OF QUALIFIED WHITE WORKERS.

4. COMMENT: COORDINATING COUNCIL HAS SUCH POLITICAL CLOUT WITHIN SAG THAT WHEN COUNCIL OFFICIALS FLEW TO CAPE TOWN FEBRUARY 10 TO PROTEST RELAXATION OF JOB RESERVATION IN BUILDING INDUSTRY (A-9) LABOUR MINISTER VILJOEN NOT ONLY RECEIVED THEM PERSONALLY BUT ARRANGED FOR THEM TO SEE PRIME MINISTER AS WELL. FEDERAL COUNCIL DOES NOT POSSESS THIS TYPE OF POLITICAL STRENGTH AT PRESENT BUT DERIVES SATISFACTION FROM KNOWLEDGE THAT IT IS FAR MORE IN TUNE WITH ECONOMIC FACTS OF LIFE.  
GUTHRIE

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